

tions, whereas the ICISS reckons with the tenuous grounds and language for forging the requisite political compromises.

Not to detract from Lepard's monumental accomplishment, for he has given us a wonderful bird's-eye view of the ethical and legal landscape, but he does not tell us enough about the respective power of the players or the context in which conflicts are played out. It is not that Lepard denies that politics affects the enforcement of international law, but that he weights his account toward ethical dimensions. For instance, Lepard does an admirable job highlighting the moral quandaries and quagmires surrounding NATO's action in Kosovo, such as explaining the philosophy behind the Independent International Commission on Kosovo's conclusion that the intervention was illegal, but legitimate. This gives us a view of the humanitarian imperative (legitimacy questions), but does not fully recognize the mechanics of international law (the politics of designating legality) and the dearth of capacities for engaging in humanitarian interventions (the politics of commitment and will).

Moreover, in his eagerness to trumpet the story of humanitarianism since the end of the Cold War, Lepard ignores the alternative story of increasing disengagement from humanitarian concerns on the part of the

world's greatest power. Lepard's book presents us with a blueprint for ethically grounding humanitarian intervention in international law, but in light of current U.S. policy and volatile world politics, it would seem these plans are destined to remain on the drawing board.

The strength of the book, then, is Lepard's analysis of ethical and religious traditions, and his meticulous connection of these traditions' imperatives to key provisions in the UN Charter. Though Lepard goes to great, often successful, lengths to pinpoint significant ideas and morals in the vast array of diverse religions presented, he does not sufficiently explain how the ethics he identifies could be institutionalized at the decisive political level. For me, determining who has which power is the key to realizing human rights in international politics. Only through an accurate depiction of what is possible can we begin to actualize what we desire. Lepard dares us to dream of a world where humanitarian intervention is an accepted part of the responses available to the international community when states violate the rights of their own citizens. But by not showing how to make this a reality, we may well wake up to find that, indeed, politics matter.

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Agency and Ethics: The Politics of Military Intervention, Anthony F. Lang, Jr. (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2002), 242 pp., \$66.50 cloth, \$22.95 paper.

Conventional wisdom holds that power politics is the dominant force behind international intervention; ideology, though often invoked, is given little sway. In an interesting shift, Anthony Lang examines the politics of military intervention through the alterna-

tive lens of normative politics, paying close attention to the norms of liberalism, colonialism, and humanitarianism. According to Lang, it is the clash of normative agendas that causes the political practice of intervention to fail in the end.

In order to develop his argument, Lang proposes a theory of state agency that draws on the political philosophy of Hannah Arendt and Hans Morgenthau. Lang uses Arendt's notion of "agonal politics" and Morgenthau's of "national purpose" to argue that a state's international political action is guided by norms that emerge from the narration—by politicians, diplomats, historians, and other community members—of that state's past. Rather than beginning from fixed, essentialist state identities, as a realist might do, he maintains that interactions in the international arena allow states to express themselves and to be expressed.

For Lang, the motive for intervention is derived from normative principles created by narrations of a state's past which are fundamental to the construction of the intervenor's identity: the decision to act in the international realm is thus a function of "the history of a national community that certain members of that community wish to valorize" (p. 27).

The book presents three case studies to illustrate the argument: the U.S. and British intervention in Russia in 1918, the British, French, and Israeli intervention in Egypt in 1956, and the U.S.-led UN intervention in Somalia in 1993. Concerning the U.S. intervention in Russia, Lang argues that President Wilson—guided by liberal norms—was more interested in aiding the Czechoslovak army and fostering Czechoslovak self-determination than in meeting the military needs of the Allies. Further, he claims that the normative impulse to restore internal and world order prompted the British intervention in Russia—though Winston Churchill's realist concept of maintaining the balance of power in Europe also played an important role.

In the chapter on intervention in Egypt, Lang does not deny the strategic importance of the Suez Canal as a motivation for inter-

vention; he chooses, however, to focus on the "moral obligations" the French and British felt they had, owing to their colonial and great power status. The British, Lang says, saw themselves as protectors of both Arabs and an international morality that, in their view, Gamal Abd al-Nasser had violated. As for the French, they felt compelled to side with Israel out of a shared historical memory of French and Jewish experiences during the Holocaust. Moreover, they sought to restore their ability—blocked, they thought, by Nasser—to promote French culture throughout the Middle East and North Africa. Lang contrasts these normative concerns with the politics of their operationalization. Lang argues that, in the end, the intervention failed because of conflicting normative agendas: France refused to engage U.S. involvement, whereas Great Britain wanted it; France sided with Israel, whereas Great Britain did not; and finally, Great Britain saw itself as the protector of international morality, and so bypassed the UN—yet the French did not trust the British to make the right policies.

The final case study looks at the normative global values and political interests of the UN intervention in Somalia by focusing on the relationship between the humanitarian and the political, again arguing that the normative had priority. In the euphoria of the post-Cold War, Lang describes how the UN intervened in Somalia as an attempt to put into place "the ideals of the UN and other global institutions" (p. 157).

The underlying goal of the book is to examine the effect of the dominating normative factors in intervention by highlighting the separation of the normative from the political. In his description of agency, Lang relies on the constructivist view that state identity is created dialogically; in his analysis of the normative and the political,

however, he is less attentive to dialogical interplay. That is, one might argue that not only is state agency created dialogically, but that normative factors themselves are also socially constructed through their interplay with the agent. Indeed, Lang does not address constructivist arguments concerning the relationship between the reification of the state and the reification of epistemological boundaries associated with the separation of politics from ethics. If state agency is indeed socially constructed, then the norms that influence state behavior are part and parcel of that construction. For example, the separation of the colonial Great Britain concerned with the geopolitical importance of the Suez Canal from the colonial Great Britain concerned with defending international morality is not perhaps as radically differentiated in fact as Lang would seem to think. If state agency is socially constructed, then the ethical can also be seen as socially constructed through the constant interplay between the agent and the political. Lang is thus constructivist in his analysis of state agency but surprisingly *unconstructivist* in his arguments concerning the relationship between agency and ethics.

Norms are always present in political decisionmaking; hence, they always affect the operationalization of political ends. To present them as separate elements in decision-making is to invite a radical separation in their understanding. The question is not whether or not norms dominate political ends or political ends dominate norms, nor is it how one hinders the other. The question is how and why the two have come to be separated in modernity and the study of international relations. In sum, Lang might have spent more time explaining why he sepa-

rates the normative from the political and the implications of that separation for state actions before presenting the case studies through the lens of that separation.

In the field of international relations theory, the use of the word “and” has important implications. For example, to say ethics *and* international relations is to imply that there can be ethics without international relations and international relations without ethics. Those who believe that ethics can be separated from international relations have a binary topography. The First Debate in international relations soon after World War II involved the distinction between realism and idealism, the separation of the political from the normative. One might argue, however, that there is an ethical assumption in the very separation of ethics from international relations, in the opposition of realism to idealism, in the distinction between the political and the normative. One might argue that the very use of the word *and* in ethics and international relations has enormous ethical/political assumptions since it presupposes that the normative has no political content and that the political is void of normative elements.

Anthony Lang has written an extremely sophisticated, well-researched, and interesting book. The fact that a young scholar of his capabilities assumes the distinction between the political and the normative testifies to the power of the distinction and the realization that the binary distinctions of the First Debate are still with us in spite of current constructivist arguments about state agency.

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